



Brian Tregaskis Photo

Provoan lands record trout

⁵⁻²⁶⁻⁸⁷
Brent Swanner of Provo caught the big one that "didn't get away" recently on the lower Provo River when he landed this

seven-pound German Brown on a 8-pound test line. It took him 20 minutes to land the trophy trout.

Fish face difficult battle for survival

3 Nov 1988

By JOHN BEST

Herald Correspondent

Fishermen and wildlife groups feel they have lost an important battle if a Bureau of Reclamation decision to lower water flows on the Provo River is upheld.

Division of Wildlife Resources Aquatic Research Analyst Mark Holden said tests have been conducted with lower stream flows but the impact will not be known until all the material can be analyzed. Holden refused to give any predictions until an accurate analysis is completed. The date for that decision is Dec. 1.

Meanwhile, the Provo River Water Users have set a Nov. 7 date to cut off flows from the dam.

Fishermen say it is not difficult to predict what will happen.

"A fish can't live without water," said Doug Hoopes of the Fly Fisher's Den. "It's like cutting a frog's legs off and then seeing how far it will jump."

Hoopes fishes the Provo River frequently and said, "I think the Bureau of Reclamation's decision will devastate the best brown trout fishery in the state if the water is lowered."

One of the best fishermen in the state and an ecological-minded sportsman is Gene Snow of the Angler's Inn. Snow said he has fished the Provo River since 1939, and has seen the groups that control that river destroy one of the most pristine rivers in America.

"At one time there were more than 80 miles of class I blue ribbon fishing on the Provo River. Since 1950 almost all of that has been dewatered, dried up, channeled, dredged, moved for highways, damaged and destroyed," said Snow.

He said the destruction has come because controlling groups have always placed a higher priority on items other

(See RIVER, Page 2)

tah, Thursday, November 3, 1988

RIVER:

(Continued from Page 1)

than wildlife and natural resources.

Snow said, "In the early days prior to 1950, the Provo River was pristine and had excellent ecology with self-sustaining populations of brown trout."

He added, "One of the state's biggest problems that allow destruction like this to happen is archaic water laws that do not consider fish, recreation and natural resource values."

The DWR's Holden said win-

ter flows are critical to fish.

"This is when fish are in their harshest conditions. Many of Utah's streams may be in critical conditions this winter because of low stream flows. Generally conditions become more harsh during the winter as water levels lower."

The studies being conducted by the Inner Agency Committee of the DWR, BOR, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the Water Conservation District are investigating aquatic insect life, spawning, reproduction and habitat conditions for

adult and juvenile fish in lower stream flows.

Lou Stonebraker of American Fork is a treasurer in the Utah Fly Rodder's Club and said he fears little or no water will destroy essential vegetation and spawning beds.

"It's pathetic. Right now it's like fishing in a hatchery because the fish are congregated. I hate to see it like this. In the 50s fishing was super. We caught 14 and 15-pound browns. We are concerned now about the river, but we really don't know what we can do."

Fishing groups organize meetings on Provo River

By JOSEPHINE ZIMMERMAN
Herald Staff Writer

Two fishing organizations have scheduled a public meeting Dec. 1 at 7:30 p.m. in the new Salt Lake County Complex, 2100 S. State, to discuss recent problems on the Provo River.

"With the possible exception of the Green River, the Provo is Utah's most important trout stream. There is no place in the United States where a trout stream of such high quality is found so close to a major metropolitan area," the organizations said in a statement released today.

The organizations include the Stonefly Society chapter of Trout Unlimited and the Federation of Fly Fishers.

"The Provo is Utah's most important trout stream. In October and November of this year, local water groups led by Salt Lake City and Salt Lake County water districts proposed to reduce by over 50 percent required minimum winter flows in the Provo River's canyon section below Deer Creek reservoir. Attorneys representing the Stonefly Society and the Utah Wildlife Leadership Coalition worked closely with Congressman Wayne Owens to avert this potential tragedy," the statement continued.

Sportsmen have argued that before Provo River flows are reduced, Salt Lake City and County water departments should establish aggressive conservation programs to reduce water use, limit peak water use during the summer, purchase irrigation water, and temporarily expand groundwater use. None of these steps have been undertaken, they charge.

The Central Utah Project had planned to reduce normal winter flow on the Provo from about 200 cubic feet per second (cfs) to 100 cfs. Studies by the Utah Division of Wildlife Resources and the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation indicated that the flow reduction would not harm the Provo river.

This reduction in winter flow

reduction would provide 20,000 acre feet of water which has been sold to Salt Lake City and Salt Lake County Water Conservancy District. However, this year's drought conditions have caused the actual flow of the Provo River at Deer Creek to drop to only 110 cubic feet per second.

Representatives of many agencies involved with Provo River water hammered out a memorandum of understanding two weeks ago which will allow reduction of flow at 75 cfs. for now. At the same time, the Division of Wildlife Resources closed the river to fishing until flows can be increased, because the reduced flows make the fish more vulnerable.

At next Thursday's meeting, Jeffrey Appel of the law firm of Haley and Stolebarger, will discuss the history of this conflict and future potential problems on the Provo River. Kenley Brunsdale will discuss the role played by Congressman Owens.

Portion of Provo River Closed to Fishing

11-23-88

The Director of the Utah Division of Wildlife Resources closed the Provo River to fishing from the dam of Deer Creek Reservoir to Olmstead Diversion. This closure became effective at 12:01 a.m. on Nov. 16 and will remain in effect until further notice.

This rule was modified to com-

ply with an agreement among various water conservancy groups, sportsmen representatives, the Department of Natural Resources and other state and federal agencies for reduced streamflow in the Provo River. Reduced streamflow put fish in a stressed condition. This agreement to close fishing was reached

to prevent more stress from fishing pressure and to protect the spawning brown trout.

All other provisions of the 1988 Proclamation of the Wildlife Board For Fish, Crayfish and Brine Shrimp commonly known as the Fishing Proclamation, remain in full force and effect.

Net profits



Herald Photo/Brian Tregaskis

4-12-89 DWR works the Provo River

Low water levels on the Provo River have not destroyed the fish population as had been feared. Here, Mark Holden, of the Division of Wildlife Resources, nets a brown trout during river testing. DWR biologist Doug Sakaguchi

looks on as the two joined others who are working between Olmstead Diversion and Deer Creek Dam throughout the week. Daily Herald Associate Sports Editor Rod Collett provides a fishing outlook today on Page C1.

Sports



Wednesday
April 12, 1989

C₁

DWR discovering true fish populations

4-12-89
By ROD COLLETT

Associate Sports Editor

Wondering what low water has done to the fishery on the upper Provo River between Olmstead Diversion and Deer Creek Dam?

From my observations: (1) There was no massive kill off of game fish; (2) Low water has not destroyed huge amounts of habitat as first feared; (3) Fish numbers are basically intact per quarter mile; and (4) those who like to fly fish or toss out a lure will likely catch some mighty huge browns this spring.

All this is emerging from a study, both biologically and visually, being performed by the Utah Division of Wildlife Resources all this week on what many anglers believe is the No. 1 trout stream in Utah.

After watching Charlie Thompson, fisheries biologist for the DWR, and his cohorts perform a population estimate Tuesday, I came away convinced this portion of the river escaped the ravages of a political fight late last fall that threatened to run the river dry.

"We make two passes through the stream with electrified nets and try to remove all the fish in a certain distance," Thompson said. "We try to get 80 percent of the fish the first time and the rest on the second pass. Then we can figure the total population," explained Thompson.

Four DWR employees use the charged nets as the team makes its sweep. The fish are stunned and other workers follow with nets to scoop the fish, many of them two or three pounds, into a small boat.

"After trapping all the fish, we hold them in live cages. A few fish, usually 20, will be weighed, measured and autopsied to determine the condition of the fish and how they came through the winter."

The survey is performed every three years. This year five stations have been set up on the river. Tuesday, the DWR began early in the morning near the old railroad trestle and moved upstream.

Thompson said the study also evaluates how the fish respond to special regulations

(artificial angling only) and in this case minimum water flows out of Deer Creek.

During the autopsy, Thompson looks for the condition of the fish's gills, eyes, fat content, internal organs, etc.

Once studied, the results are entered into a portable computer and the data compared to other sections of the river and other years.

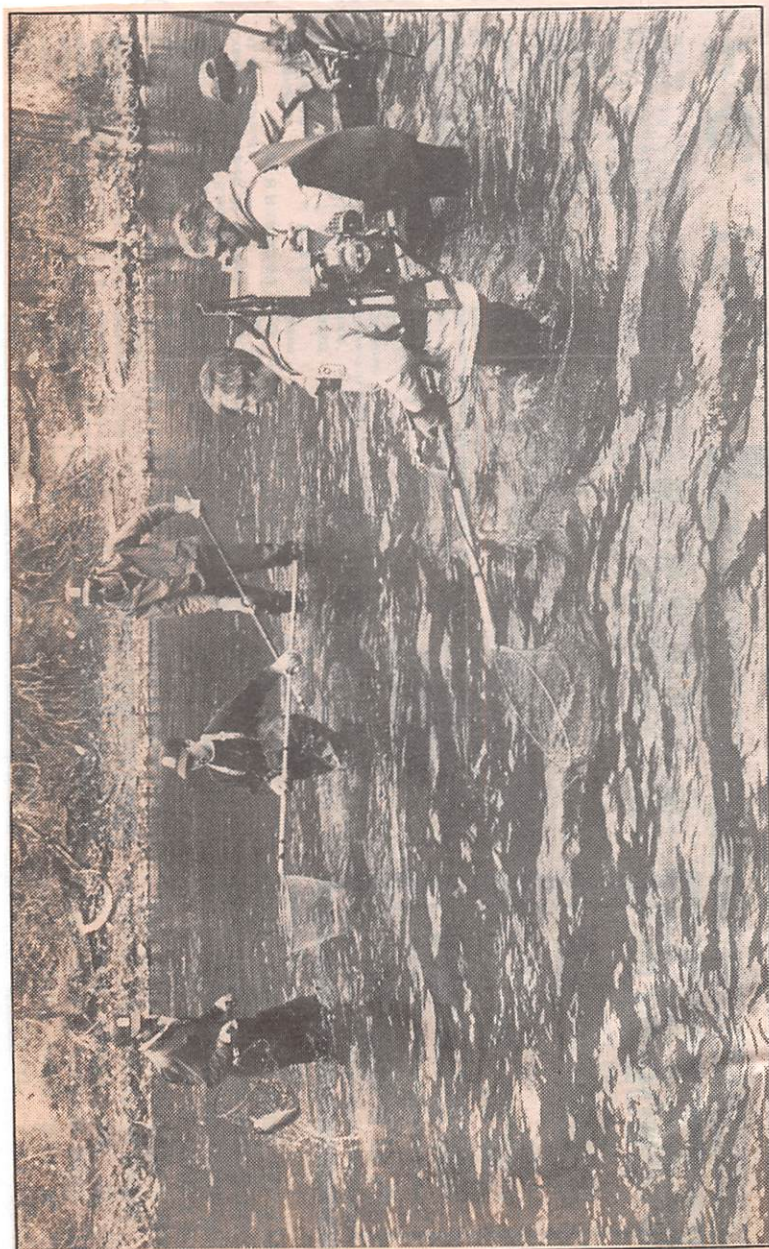
The trout were the center of controversy this past winter when water users, fearful of drought conditions, sought to reduce flows so the reservoir would fill.

A compromise agreement among water users, the DWR, sportsmen's organizations and Rep. Wayne Owens, D-Utah, was reached which set flows at 80 cubic feet per second. The river was closed to fishing as part of that agreement.

Water users declared the reservoir full last Monday based upon the remaining snow pack in the mountains.

The biologists counted about 840 fish in a quarter-mile stretch of the river near Vivian Park Monday and around

— over



Herald Photos/Brian Tregaskis

12 Apr 1989
DWR workers, including Charlie Thompson, (fourth from left), and Leo Lentsch, Justin Shurtliff, Mark Holden and Bob Spateholtz work upriver stunning the fish.

300 in a stretch above the Sundance turnoff Tuesday.

Final data and analysis won't be compiled until later in the week but preliminary indications were that fish numbers were about average.

Thompson said the river between the dam and Olmstead could reopen this Monday.

Most of the fish being stunned and studied are browns, whitefish, sculp and an occasional rainbow.

"One year, we found a 12-pound walleye in the section just below Deer Creek," said Thompson. "It must have come out of the reservoir."



Fisheries biologist Charlie Thompson weighs a brown trout during a river study Tuesday morning.

Provo River fishing 'slow to fair'

4-14-89
By REX C. INFANGER
Herald Correspondent

PROVO RIVER — The upper end above Deer Creek Reservoir has been slow with runoff clouding the water on the warmer days. Fish a light green weighted latex caddis. The lower end through Provo has been fair for small fish with worms.

YUBA — A few walleye are being picked up with three-inch chartreuse Twin Tail Mr. Twister.

MONA — Fair fishing for walleye along the rocky shores at the north end. Use Crayfish Salt Smelly Jelly on a motor oil sparkle salt grub.

UTAH LAKE — Fair to slow walleye fishing behind Geneva and at the island. Use a long body blue over silver or purple over silver Thin Fin. A few catfish are being picked up with chicken livers.

STARVATION — The ice has come off the lake but there has been no report on fishing.

STRAWBERRY — There is still lots of ice on the lake, but fishing has been slow. Fish a white maribou jig tipped with a piece of worm. Be careful getting onto the ice as the edge is soft in some places.

WILLARD BAY — Fair walleye fishing with a pearl chartreuse Swimming Minnow with Crayfish Salt Smelly Jelly on it. Use an eighth-ounce head and fish along the north dike.

GREEN RIVER — Slow fishing and lots of people. If you've got the choice to go anywhere else, do so.

FISH LAKE — The ice is getting soft around the edge but is still fairly good in the middle. Macs and rainbows are being caught using a jig tipped with Super Trout Float 'N Glow Bait. Take your sunglasses and

sunscreen along.

PIUTE — Good fishing with eggs on a sliding sinker rig. Fish in the three-pound class are being taken. Use four- to six-pound test line.

OTTER CREEK — Good fishing from the shore on the downwind side of the points. Use eggs on a sliding sinker rig.

KOOSHAREM — Good fishing near the dam with an egg and Velveeta combination on a sliding sinker rig.

DEER CREEK — Fair fishing in the back of Wallsburg Bay with a worm and egg combination three feet under a red and white bobber. Fishing is best in the late afternoon or early in the morning before the sun hits the water.

SCOFIELD — The ice is slushy around the edges and fishing has been slow. Use a

worm and egg combination on a size 16 treble. Unless you enjoy the scenery, it's probably not worth the trip.

LAKE POWELL — A few small stripers are being picked up with anchovie on an eighth-ounce jig. Fish down 20 to 35 feet. Walleye are being picked up on motor oil sparkle six inch worms.

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Provo River fish look about the same as they have in past, study concludes

By Brooke Adams
Deseret News staff writer

PROVO — A study conducted last week in the Provo River concludes that the condition of fish in the river is comparable to that of previous years.

However, it is premature to say the low water level of the river had no effect on the fish, says a state Division of Wildlife Resources official.

"The numbers look like the same as they have been other years we've done our estimates," said Charlie Thompson, regional fisheries manager.

"Their condition is fair, comparable to what it has been in the past." It is expected that the fish will be in fair condition following a winter.

There were no indications that low water had affected the fish population, Thompson said. However, most of the fish counted were mature, and

Wildlife officials found that the fish on the Provo River were looking good but were not as large as expected.

PHOTOGRAPHY/ RICK GLEASON

Fish stories

● Fishing on the Provo River between Deer Creek Dam and the Olmstead Diversion Dam will open at 6 a.m. Wednesday. Artificial lures must be used along this section of river, with a limit of two fish per angler. Bait fishing is allowed from the diversion dam to Utah Lake, with a limit of eight fish per angler.

● The river from I-15 to Utah Lake will be closed to fishing nightly between 7 p.m. and 5 a.m. until April 30 to protect spawning walleye.

fish most affected by lower water levels are juveniles and spawning fish.

"The effect won't show for three to four years," Thompson said.

Approximately 1,500 to 2,000 fish were analyzed in the section of river between Canyon Glen and the upper train trestle. Wildlife officials swept the river in teams, using an electrified net to temporarily stun the fish so they could be weighed and mea-

sured. At the four stations along the river — (Canyon Glen, Bridal Veil Falls, Vivian Park and the upper train trestle — there were an average of 500 to 600 fish counted per quarter mile. The most fish, more than 800, were counted at the Vivian Park station.

"They ranged in size from 10 inches to 20 inches," Thompson said. "As you move up the canyon, the fish get larger."

Fish measured near the Vivian Park station averaged 12 to 15 inches in length, while those along the upper train trestle averaged 15 to 20 inches, Thompson said.

Wildlife officials had expected to see larger fish in the river since the initiation of the artificial-lure regulation on the river from the Olmstead to Woodland, Summit County, in 1980.

"We felt we would start to see fish in the 4- to 5-pound size, but we haven't seen that happen yet," Thompson said. "That's not to say they are not high-quality fish. They are nice; we just thought we would see larger fish than that."

Failure of fishermen to abide by fishing regulations and the erratic flow level of the river — high in summer and low in winter — probably

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are preventing fish from reaching the hoped-for sizes, Thompson said.

In addition to gathering weight and size data, wildlife officials removed 80 fish from the river, Thompson said. The fishes' eyes, gills, internal organs, stomach content, gender, fat ratio and fin condition will be checked to determine whether the fish had suffered any adverse habitat or environment effects.

Wildlife officials will begin stocking the river with 20,000 fish in June.

Mark Edmonds, Lehi, lands a brown trout on the Provo River this morning. The river reopened to fishing today after water flows were increased.

Herald Photo/Lane Critser



Anglers can help protect Provo River

4-23-89

The full length of the Provo River is now open for fishing and those who appreciate what this outdoor resource means to Utah will be happy to know the habitat and trout numbers have fared well despite low water.

All the facts aren't in, but from a canyon-long survey a week ago which included studying size, weight, gills and internal organs of dozens of fish, it was found that trout numbers were basically intact.

But there are a few things the public can do this summer as they use this resource.

- Catch and release all fish: Whether it's pansize or a large brown, fish that are returned to the river in good condition will be caught again someday and will be a "bigger" experience for some other angler.

- When catching fish use a barbless hook.

- When handling fish, avoid contact with the gills and don't squeeze too hard. Trout have a protective

Herald comment

slime on their skin.

- When wading in the river, avoid dragging your feet. Whether purposely or accidentally, this has often been called the "San Juan Shuffle," a method used by many anglers to stir up the bottom and excite the fish. It's also illegal. Gravel areas on the bottom are prime, sensitive German Brown spawning areas.

- Be a sportsman. Don't use illegal baits in posted areas. Fish away from other people who are working a particular stretch of the river.

- Finally, keep the parks and hiking trails along the river clean and free of trash and debris. A clean river system protects not only the fish and animals, but aesthetically, it makes for a better outdoor experience for all citizens.



Rainbow trout stocking boosts urban fishing opportunities

Thurs 4 May 1989

By JOHN BEST
Herald Correspondent

Urban fishing in Utah County received a tremendous boost during the past week.

Wednesday morning fishery biologist Kelly Nelson dumped nets full of jumping rainbow trout into the Provo River. "Besides the Provo River we have stocked Hobbie Creek, American Fork Canyon, Jordan River, Salem Pond, Vernon Reservoir and Grantsville Reservoir," said Nelson.

The Division of Wildlife Resource spring stocking program is placing more than 60,000 catchable rainbow trout in local waters from Silver Lake in American Fork Canyon to Payson Reservoir in Payson Canyon. These early spring stocks will be completed by Memorial Day.

Nelson says the present ef-

forts are aimed at providing good urban fishing. Utah Valley residents have excellent fishing opportunities because of the 46 ponds, lakes, streams and rivers near the metropolitan areas. All of the local waters termed "urban fisheries" are receiving spring stocks of rainbow.

The nine-inch rainbow trout being planted locally have all been raised at the Springville Hatchery. The hatchery receives eyed eggs from the Egan Hatchery in Bicknell each year and raises them approximately 10 months until they reach their catchable and releasable size.

"The current Springville facility is down in production because of a reconstruction project," Springville Hatchery Superintendent Doug Robinson said. "The project is hoped to be completed by September and

is designed to double water flow and add oxygen ejection." Robinson says the project should allow the hatchery to improve overall production by one third to one half by next year.

This year the hatchery is producing 190,000 of the bright colored rainbow that will be stocked in local waters during the spring and summer. An additional 70,000 are being raised to be released this fall. When the hatchery facility is back to regular production they will add 70,000 more fish for Deer Creek Reservoir and 500,000 fingerlings for Strawberry.

Water levels are ideal for stocking this spring. The low run off provides good survivability for fish. However, DWR officials will be concerned if water levels are lower in the summer and fall stocking peri-

od. Extremely low water is not suitable for fish survivability.

Nelson planted 1,500 fish Wednesday morning on the lower Provo River between Geneva Road and the Murdock Diversion in Provo Canyon. "This helps maintain good populations in the urban areas where many fish are caught throughout the summer. Our estimates of fish population on the lower Provo area around 1,000 to 1,200 fish per quarter mile." The upper Provo River, which has guidelines for artificial lures only and limit restrictions, has been averaged 1,200 to 1,400 fish per quarter mile and maintains its population by natural reproduction only. The higher population without stocking is attributed to the carefully planned regulations and many catch and release style fishermen.

Sports

May 1989



Kenneth Giles, a Springville Hatchery worker, empties his net in rainbow stocking on the Provo River.

John Best photo

Fishing report: fish moving deeper; evening good time to try Provo River

14 July 1987
By REX C. INFANGER
Herald Correspondent

PROVO RIVER — Good late evening fishing above the trestle. Use a size 18 caddis larva with a sink tip. Some planters are being picked up below the Murdock Diversion with cheese.

BEAR LAKE — Cutthroat fishing has been fair. Troll down four colors with a perch pattern or yellow with red spot Kwikfish size seven.

EAST CANYON — Fair fishing from the boats. Troll a worm and pop gear down four colors. Most of

the fish are pan size.

PINEVIEW — Crappie fishing is good with many over one pound being caught. Fish down 12 to 15 feet with a white 32nd-ounce jig tipped with worm.

PIUTE — Excellent fishing from the boats. Use a pink Carter Spoon down four colors. Use at least an 18-foot leader to get good lure action.

DIAMOND FORK — The upper end has been fair on the tributaries. The water is way down and clear so use a lot of caution when approaching the holes. Use worms

and no weight on two or four pound test line.

SCHOFIELD — Good fishing from the boats. Fish down four colors with an orange Carter Spoon. Fishing from shore has slowed down.

DEER CREEK — The hot weather has moved the fish down in the lake, fish down five colors or 20 to 25 feet with a downrigger. Use a black and white 970 Triple Teaser. Perch fishing has been fair with worms on the upper end along the west shore.

STRAWBERRY — Good fishing

along the east shore from the old dam up to Sage Creek. Fish down five colors with an orange frog Carter Spoon.

OTTER CREEK — Fishing has been excellent along the west shore from the boats. Use pop gear, a size two silver Mepps trailer and then a worm.

GENERAL — This time of year most game fish in our area move to deeper, cooler water. Use lighter line to get down to them — it has less resistance to the water so it gets down to the fish faster and you spend more time fishing.

